

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (OMISSION LINES 11 AND 12
SECOND QUESTION)

E.O. 11652:/ ,XA

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: EXCERPT FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PRESS CONFER-
ENCE, THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1974

SECRETARY KISSINGER RESPONDED AS FOLLOWS ON LATIN AMERICA:

Q: MR. SECRETARY, THE CURRENT OIL EMBARGO HAS HIGHLIGHTED
THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS THE LONG STANDING
EMBARGO OF ITS OWN AGAINST CUBA. IN VIEW OF YOUR GENERAL
POLICY OF RAPPROCHEMENT, EXPANDED TRADE WITH THE SOVIETS
AND THE CHINESE, DO YOU THINK ITS ABOUT TIME TO REEXAMINE
THAT EMBARGO OF CUBA WITH AN EYE TOWARDS RELAXING (IT)?

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A: WE HAVE STATED REPEATEDLY THAT THIS DEPENDS IN THE

FIRST INSTANCE ON SOME MODIFICATION OF CUBAN POLICIES AND IN THAT CASE WE WOULD CERTAINLY LOOK AT OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH AN OPEN MIND.

Q: FOR A LONG TIME WE HAVE BEEN HEARING THAT THERE WILL BE A CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY WHEN THERE IS A MODIFICATION OF CUBAN POLICY TOWARDS THE U.S. IN POINT OF FACT SIR, HAS THERE NOT BEEN SOME KIND OF MODIFICATION IN CUBAN POLICY, NOT EVEN SPEAKING OF THE HIJACKING AGREEMENT, BUT A LESSENING OF THE VITRIOLIC OUT POURINGS FROM CUBA? AND ALSO, CAN YOU NOT CONSIDER THIS IN A LARGER CONTEXT IN VIEW OF THE OVERALL LATIN AMERICAN SCENE. YOUR RECENT TRIP TO MEXICO, I THINK, DEMONSTRATED THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE SENTIMENT ABOUT THE U.S. CHANGE IN POLICY. AND AREN'T WE BEING COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE WHEN WE MAINTAIN -- COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IN OUR LATIN AMERICAN POLICY -- WHEN WE MAINTAIN THE STANCE WE DO TOWARD CUBA?

A: GOOD. ON MY RECENT TRIP IN LATIN AMERICA THE IMPRESSIONS THAT THE PRESS ACQUIRED FROM OCCASIONAL INDIVIDUAL BRIEFINGS DID NOT NECESSARILY COINCIDE WITH THE IMPRESSIONS THAT THE DELEGATES ACQUIRED INSIDE THE ROOM. AND I READ ABOUT SOME DRAMATIC CONFRONTATIONS ON PARTICULAR ISSUES WHICH I HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY RECOLLECTING.

NEVERTHELESS, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE COURSE ON WHICH WE ARE EMBARKED IN LATIN AMERICA HAS UP TO NOW BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTED BY THE CUBAN QUESTION.

WE DO PLACE GREAT STRESS ON VITALIZING THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE NATIONS IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. WE THINK THAT THE MEXICO CITY CONFERENCE MADE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION TO THIS, AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING IN WASHINGTON WILL HOPEFULLY CONTINUE THIS PROCESS. UP TO NOW THE CUBAN ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN THESE DISCUSSIONS. KISSINGER

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